

**VIRGINIA CIRCUIT COURT
RECORDS PRESERVATION PROGRAM**

**GUIDELINES FOR GRANT-FUNDED
PRESERVATION MICROFILMING OF
CIRCUIT COURT RECORDS**

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Virginia Circuit Court Records Preservation Program

GUIDELINES FOR GRANT-FUNDED PRESERVATION MICROFILMING OF CIRCUIT COURT RECORDS

PURPOSE OF GUIDELINES

This document provides guidance to Circuit Court Clerks and Vendors desiring to enter into a contract for the preservation microfilming of circuit court records using grant funds from the Circuit Court Records Preservation Program. It is understood that:

- ▶ The documents ***Standards for Microfilming Public Records*** and ***Guidelines for Accepting Microfilm, Microfiche, or Optical Media for Security Storage at the Library of Virginia*** shall be adhered to for all preservation reformatting projects using grant funds. These documents are available from the Library of Virginia's Web site (www.lva.lib.va.us) and the Circuit Court Records Preservation Program's grants administration office.
- ▶ The camera negative is to be used only for preservation purposes and/or as a master to produce an intermediate working master.
- ▶ Each Clerk will independently enter into a service contract with the selected vendor.

CONTACT INFORMATION:

These guidelines were compiled by the Records Management and Imaging Services Division of the Library of Virginia. For additional information on them, contact:

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DEFINITIONS

Clerk: The Circuit Court Clerk, the office of the Circuit Court Clerk, and/or the locality of the Circuit Court Clerk.

Document: A page or collection of pages containing information on one or both sides of each page.

Grants Administrator: The administrator of the Circuit Court Records Preservation Program.

Image: The information captured on film from one side of a loose page or two facing pages of a bound volume.

LVA: Library of Virginia.

Page: A piece of paper containing information on one or both sides.

Pre-1913 Records: Records created before January 1, 1913. Generally those documents that are handwritten on off-white or multi-colored paper with varying degrees of contrast (e.g., ended chancery causes and marriage bonds).

Post-1912 Records: Records created after December 31, 1912. For reformatting purposes, generally those documents that are typed on white paper and have consistent size and shading (e.g., current indices and land tax books).

Retake: Error correction.

Vendor: A business that bids on and/or enters into a contract with the Clerk for preservation microfilming services.

Virginia Standards: *Standards for Microfilming Public Records*; 17 VAC 15-20 REV: 2001

1N: The original silver reel of microfilm in the camera head being exposed during the filming process. This reel is to be negative polarity.

2N/P: The silver intermediate or working master copy of microfilm; the roll from which all user or 3N copies are duplicated. This reel may be negative or positive.

3N: The negative user copy of the microfilm. This reel must be silver unless otherwise indicated.

SPECIFICATIONS

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1. FILMING REQUIREMENTS

When requesting work proposals and price quotes from a Vendor, the Clerk should furnish the Vendor sufficient information so that the Vendor may submit an economical and accurate quotation. This information should include, but not be restricted to, the following:

- 1.1 Estimate of total exposures to be filmed. An exposure constitutes one side of a page. Only one image may be contained in a single exposure.
- 1.2 Physical characteristics of records to be filmed: size, card or paper stock, color of documents, color of inks used, color variations, if any.
- 1.3 Width of film must be:
 - 1.3.1 35mm for Pre-1913 Records.
 - 1.3.2 35mm or 16mm for Post-1912 Records.
- 1.4 A planetary camera will be used for filming all records.
- 1.5 Reduction ratio:
 - 1.5.1 Minimum of 16:1 through a maximum of 19:1 for 35mm film. Adjustment for oversized documents (those that do not fit in 19:1 frame) is permitted, up to 21:1.
 - 1.5.2 A ratio of 24:1 for 16mm film.
 - 1.5.3 For any other desired reduction ratio, consult the Director of Imaging Services.
- 1.6 In the camera negative and all copies of the microfilm, when microfilming loose papers or volumes without page numbers, a clearly readable, accurate counter number (preferably electronic) must appear in the top right corner of each exposure containing an image. The numbers must appear in numerical order throughout the entire reel.
- 1.7 Physical arrangement and sequence of documents on camera negative film must be in simplex, comic mode (ANSI/AIIM IB or IIB), unless otherwise agreed to by the Clerk and the Grants Administrator, with the top right corner of each document in the same position within each frame, at least one inch down from, and not being shadowed by, the counter. There must be adequate space between frames to allow for the splicing of errors and retakes.

- 1.8 One set of original LVA filming targets, with instructions, will be provided to the Vendor. Copies of these targets will be made by the Vendor for incorporation into the beginning and ending titling sequence of each reel. The document, *Guidelines for Accepting Microfilm, Microfiche, or Optical Media for Security Storage at the Library of Virginia*, is to be followed for labeling all reels.
- 1.9 Unless otherwise specified, the original and copies of each reel of film to be delivered by the Vendor, after all quality control and retakes are completed, are:
- 1.9.1 **Pre-1913 Records:**
To the Library of Virginia:
One 1N
One 2N/P copy
Two 3N copies
- To the Clerk:*
Two 3N copies
- 1.9.2 **Post-1912 Records:**
To the Library of Virginia:
One 1N
One 2N/P copy
- To the Clerk:*
One 3N (This reel may be black diazo)
- 1.9.3 For any other type of work, the type of microfilm and number of reels must be agreed to by the Clerk, the Vendor, and the Grants Administrator.
- 1.10 Each camera negative must have two continuous feet each of clear, polyester, un-spliced leader and trailer, both of which must also appear on each duplicate.
- 1.11 The Vendor may perform filming duties on site or transfer the records to a facility authorized by the Clerk and the Grants Administrator.

If the filming is to be done in the Clerk's office or locality, 1.12 through 1.13 apply:

- 1.12 The Clerk is to specify and supply the location and extent of work area available to the Vendor. The Clerk must provide this information to the Vendor in the invitation for bid. The filming location must provide an environment that allows the Vendor to produce a consistent density level on the microfilm that meets the *Virginia Standards*.
- 1.13 The Clerk should inform the Vendor of:
- 1.13.1 The facilities available in the proposed work area including, but not restricted to, available electrical power outlets, lighting, and ceiling height and type. The Vendor is strongly encouraged to inspect the proposed facilities.
- 1.13.2 A schedule of hours per day and days per week when the Vendor may or shall perform the required work.
- 1.13.3 Nature, extent, and cost of security clearances / criminal record checks required of the Vendor and relevant employees.
- 1.14 The Clerk is to provide the name, title, address and telephone number of the liaison/representative to be contacted by the Vendor.

- 1.15 The Clerk is to provide a date, time and place the Vendor may inspect the documents prior to quotation.
- 1.16 The Vendor should perform quality control inspection on all deliverable microfilm to ascertain that the *Virginia Standards* are met.
- 1.17 Delivery requirements:
 - 1.17.1 Pick-up and delivery dates of microfilm and the original records to and from the courthouse, and the quantity thereof, must be agreed to by the Clerk and the Vendor. All boxes containing oversized documents must be picked up by the Vendor as a part of the first records transfer.
 - 1.17.2 The Vendor will ship the first reel—the camera negative (1N), along with its silver intermediate working master (2N/P) and one user copy (3N)—to the LVA Imaging Services Branch for initial inspection and wait for approval before filming continues.
 - 1.17.3 Duplication, inspection, and delivery of microfilm:
 - ▶ For each 1N generated, a 2N/P must be duplicated.
 - ▶ Within five days of the Vendor completing the processing, duplication and quality control of no more than twenty reels (ten 1Ns and matching 2N/Ps), the Vendor will deliver, or have delivered, both 1Ns and 2N/Ps to the Library of Virginia's Imaging Services Branch (Attn: Sue Woo) for resolution and density inspection.
 - ▶ If more than five retakes, resulting in more than ten physical cuts, are found on a reel by the Vendor, the LVA, the Clerk's quality control personnel, or any combination of the above, then that 1N and corresponding 2N/P will be returned to the Vendor for re-filming of the reel.
 - ▶ For all reels with less than five density retakes, the 2N will be shipped from the LVA to the appropriate courthouse.
 - ▶ After all of the 2N reels that correspond to the original records of that locality in the Vendor's possession have been delivered by the LVA to the Clerk, the Vendor will then return those records to the Clerk, at which time grant project personnel will inspect the intermediate master reels image by image, and index the reel and image number.
 - ▶ For all reels requiring retakes, whether due to density problems or filming errors, the intermediate master will be returned to the Vendor, along with the corresponding original records, for retakes.
 - 1.17.4 Method of microfilm delivery will be by UPS, USPS priority mail, Federal Express, or an equivalent service; or by the Vendor directly, within the specified timeframe.
 - 1.17.5 Packaging of all reels of microfilm must be in individual acid-free, lignin-free, alkaline-buffered boxes, appropriately labeled. The delivery packaging must prevent the enclosed individual reels and film boxes from becoming damaged.
- 1.18 Progressive payment for 1N and 2N/P services and products will be contingent on the completed inspection and approval of each of those reels by the Clerk and the LVA. Payment for all 3N copies passing inspection will be made at the completion of the entire project. Billing and payment arrangements are to be worked out by agreement between the Vendor and the Clerk.

2. PREPARATION OF DOCUMENTS

- 2.1 All document preparation will be the responsibility of the Clerk whose records are being filmed, unless otherwise specified (e.g., the bid and contract may state that the Vendor will remove the bindings from land tax books).

- 2.2 All documents, prior to being microfilmed, will be appropriately prepared by the Clerk to permit accurate photographic images to be made of all pages containing information. This work includes, but is not restricted to:
 - 2.2.1 Removing all staples, rubber bands, or other devices used to bind or attach pages to one another, except where said removal requires the work of a professional conservator.
 - 2.2.2 Humidifying (if appropriate), unfolding and flattening all folded documents. Placing a target where appropriate into the records to indicate that a fold or folds cannot be removed. Should the Vendor find information in a fold that can be safely unfolded and/or flattened, the Vendor should unfold or flatten the document for filming.
 - 2.2.3 Arranging pages in the sequence in which they are to be filmed.
 - 2.2.4 Placing a target to indicate an oversized page belonging to the record is stored in another location and should be retrieved by the Vendor for microfilming at this point in the reel.
- 2.3 If any information is covered by paper that has been glued or sealed, the Vendor is not to remove the glue or break the seal. A target should be placed before the covered image indicating there is information that cannot be uncovered. After filming with the information covered, if the covering paper can be turned back without damaging the page or seal, then the Vendor should uncover the area, film it, then re-cover the area.

3. CAMERAS

- 3.1 The Vendor shall supply all cameras and/or accessories, unless otherwise specified.
- 3.2 Each camera used shall be capable of producing a clear, sharp, photographic film copy of all documents and counter numbers.

4. UNEXPOSED FILM

- 4.1 All microfilm shall be designated archival or LE500 by the manufacturer. All microfilm shall be polyester-based.
- 4.2 No microfilm shall be used by the Vendor after the manufacturer's expiration date has passed.
- 4.3 Microfilm shall be in roll format in lengths of approximately 100 feet, whenever possible.
- 4.4 The Vendor shall supply all unexposed film.

5. MICROFILMING PROCEDURES

- 5.1 Appropriate identification and certification targets shall be microfilmed at the beginning and at the end of each roll in accordance with the [*Guidelines for Accepting Microfilm, Microfiche, or Optical Media for Security Storage at the Library of Virginia*](#).
- 5.2 Only one image per frame, accompanied by the appropriate counter number, shall be filmed.

- 5.3 Any page torn in more than one piece should be filmed with the pieces fitted together rather than in individual parts. These pieces must not be taped, or in any other way bound together.
- 5.4 If information is recorded on both sides of a page, both sides of such page must be filmed sequentially: front, then back, as it is found in the folder.
- 5.5 For microfilming projects involving loose-paper court cases, a space, one image wide, shall be filmed between the end of one case and the beginning of another. If there is more than one folder per case, a blank image should not be filmed between those folders. The file folders shall be filmed horizontally (landscape), unless otherwise agreed.
- 5.6 Multiple exposures of oversize pages must have approximately a two-inch overlap for each frame.
- 5.7 The Vendor must film loose papers in the order received. The Vendor must retain the pages in their original order, and return them to their proper folder and enclosure immediately after filming. If filming an unbound volume with numbered pages that are out of sequence, the Vendor would be providing an added value by returning them to their correct sequence before filming. If the need for this becomes excessive, the Vendor should contact the Clerk to discuss a potential cost overrun.
- 5.8 Camera filters must not be used in microfilming documents unless authorized by the Grants Administrator, such as in instances where the contrast is not sufficient in the original document to allow for normal microfilming techniques.
- 5.9 For very poor-quality originals, multiple exposures (at different light settings) may be taken of each page, not to exceed a total of three exposures per image. If the total image count of the project exceeds 5% of the estimate, or the Vendor projects that possibility during the course of the project, the Vendor must notify the Clerk. Multiple exposures of a page should be filmed only where absolutely necessary.
- 5.10 The density levels for all camera negatives must conform to the *Virginia Standards*, Densities Section. The lighting levels across the camera table must allow for a uniform density level throughout each exposure.
- 5.11 As the microfilming of each box of records, or volume, is completed, the Vendor will stamp, on the exterior of the box, or inside the front cover of the volume, an indication that the records have been microfilmed. This should include the reel number and the date filmed.

6. RETAKES

- 6.1 Periodically, retakes will need to be filmed to correct errors on and omissions from original reels of microfilm. A collection of these retakes should be filmed on a single reel labeled as a retake reel. The procedures listed below should be followed when filming a reel of retakes.
- 6.2 Definitions:
 - ▶ Retake reel: The reel of film on which a series of retakes is microfilmed.
 - ▶ Subset: Those retakes that comprise the images pertaining to one error.
 - ▶ Set: All the subsets of retakes pertaining to one original reel.

- 6.3 Each retake reel shall begin with targets identifying:
- ▶ the locality,
 - ▶ that it is a retake reel,
 - ▶ the retake reel number, and
 - ▶ the title of the records being filmed (e.g., Ended Chancery Causes).
- 6.4 For each original reel (1N) requiring one or more subsets of retakes, the set must begin with a resolution chart. The resolution chart, along with the set of retakes for that reel, must be spliced at the beginning of the appropriate 1N in accordance with section 6.2. All necessary retakes should be spliced at the beginning of the 1N roll to which the retakes apply, before the start target, but after the two-foot leader. A duplicate set of the retakes shall be spliced in correct sequence on the 2N/P copy only, and before the 3N copies are created.
- 6.5 A duplicate of the retake reel must be made to allow for the sequential splicing of retake subsets into the appropriate 2N/P copies. All errors must be spliced out of the 2N/P copy. No marking of images is allowed.
- 6.6 Every subset should be identified by a target indicating into which reel and image counter number the retake should be spliced.
- 6.7 Next, the incorrect page(s) should be re-filmed with the appropriate image counter numbers in place. If pages were previously omitted, then no counter number should be used. If clarification is needed, consult with the Grants Administrator.
- 6.8 The retake subset must begin with the document that was filmed incorrectly and followed by the next five images. The length of retake film for each subset spliced in sequence should be no less than six-inches long.
- 6.9 The Vendor will ship all original retake reels (1N) to the LVA. Imaging Services staff will splice the retakes to the beginning of the appropriate 1N reel.
- 6.10 As stated in 1.17.3, if more than five retakes occur on a single roll of microfilm, the entire roll must be re-filmed.

7. PROCESSING AND QUALITY CONTROL

- 7.1 The camera negative microfilm shall be processed according to the established *Virginia Standards*.
- 7.2 The Vendor shall inspect all processed film to determine that the images permit every captured line and character to be transferred by normally available commercial processing to a legible film or paper copy.
- 7.3 The resolution shall drop no more than one pattern on the ANSI/AIIM resolution chart for each generation of microfilm duplicated.

- 7.4 The contracting Vendor shall send one methylene blue test to MSTC, Inc. for every twenty reels processed. The test shall be done and submitted in accordance with the attached instructions from MSTC, Inc. (see *Appendix A*). Results of the test will be sent to the LVA's Imaging Services Branch, and the Vendor may request a copy. (See *Appendix B* for sample test result certificate.) MSTC, Inc. will bill the LVA for each test performed as part of a grant-funded preservation microfilming project.

8. PROCESSED FILM

- 8.1 The resolution of all processed 35mm camera negatives shall be not less than 90-line pairs per millimeter with the 6.3 pattern being read in both directions using an ANSI / AIIIM approved resolution chart. The resolution of all processed 16mm camera negatives shall be not less than 90-line pairs per millimeter with the 4.0 pattern being read in both directions using an ANSI / AIIIM approved resolution chart.
- 8.2 All processed camera negative film shall be wound on the black spools on which the unexposed film was packaged. All other copies are to be wound on reels of chemically inert, non-plastic material, with good chemical stability as outlined in the ANSI/AIIM standards.
- 8.3 All user copies must be provided on spools that contain a trailer holder.
- 8.4 All copies of processed film shall be free from scratches and other defects that prevent legible paper or film copies from being produced by currently available commercial processes. All camera negatives shall be free from scratches and other defects.

9. CERTIFICATION

- 9.1 Each Vendor shall certify as part of the bid or contract that they will comply with the specifications as stated in the *Guidelines for Grant-Funded Preservation Microfilming of Circuit Court Records*.
- 9.2 The Vendor shall retain the records of this project for no fewer than six months following completion of the contract and make the records available to the Clerk or the LVA if requested.

APPENDIX A

Instructions for Obtaining Residual Thiosulfate Certifications MSTC, Inc. January 1, 1999

The residual thiosulfate ion test using the Methylene Blue Test Method can detect concentrations of thiosulfate ion above 0.001 grams per square meter. The Methylene Blue Test is required to certify Life Expectancy-500 year microfilm (previously referred to as "Archival" microfilm.)

MSTC offers a number of contractual arrangements for performing the test as described by MSTC's Methylene Blue Test Price List and Contract.

The Methylene Blue Test is performed in accordance with American National Standard ANSI/NAPM IT9.17 - 1993. Because of the sensitivity of the test, the following procedures must be used:

1. Only processed, clear film can be tested.
2. A processing date must be included with each film sample.
3. The film sample must arrive at the MSTC Laboratory within 10 calendar days after processing. If the sample arrives late, it will be returned.
4. The film sample should contain no fingerprints, dirt, or other contaminants.
5. Lacquered or coated film samples cannot be tested.
6. You must submit at least the following amounts of microfilm for the respective film types:
 - ▶ 16mm film: One 12-inch strip or two 6-inch strips.
 - ▶ 35mm film: One 6-inch strip or three aperture cards.
 - ▶ 105mm film: One 105mm X 148mm microfiche.
7. Please mark on the outside of the envelope, "MB Test."
8. Send sample to:
MSTC, Inc.
ATT: Michael Thomas
5585 Old Farm Lane
Manassas, VA 20109
9. Include your company name, contact information, and the locality of the film being tested.

The Library of Virginia will receive written certification if the test is negative. If the test shows greater than acceptable concentrations of residual thiosulfate ion, MSTC will contact you and the Library by telephone. Please furnish the name of a contact person and telephone number.

APPENDIX B

SAMPLE

MSTC, Inc. Certificate of Findings Methylene Blue Test For Residual Thiosulfate

Date Tested: 2/4/00

Sue Woo
Imaging Services Branch
Library of Virginia
800 East Broad Street
| Richmond, VA 23219

Film Description: LVA - Photo Lab Processor #3

MSTC, Inc. has tested your film sample for residual thiosulfate ion concentration. Testing was done in accordance with the methylene blue method described in the American National Standard ANSI/NAPM IT9.17-1993, *Photography—Determination of Residual Thiosulfate and Other Related Chemicals in Processed Photographic Materials—Methods Using Iodine-Amylose, Methylene Blue and Silver Sulfide*. Film containing thiosulfate concentrations of 0.014 grams per square meter, or less, meets the requirements of ANSI/NAPM IT9.1-1992, *Imaging Media (Film)—Silver-Gelatin Type—Specifications for Stability*, for Life Expectancy—500 year microfilm (previously referred to as “archival” film). This is the standard listed in the Federal Code of Regulations 36CFR—Subpart B—*Standards for Microfilming Records*, Section 1230.14c *Processing Standards*, as published under the direction of the U.S. Government's National Archives and Records Administration.

Please note that long-term film stability depends on the physical and chemical nature of the film, its residual thiosulfate level in the case of wet processed silver-gelatin films, and the conditions under which the film is stored.

Test Number	Date Processed	Film Size	Actual Concentration In g/m²	Meets ANSI/NAPM Standard for LE—500 Film
3405	2/1/00	35 mm	0.001	Yes

Certified by: Signature
Michael L. Thomas
Photographic Scientist

The methylene blue test is only meaningful and accurate if performed within two weeks after film processing. It is MSTC's understanding that we have received your film within the two-week time frame.

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5585 Old Farm Lane / Manassas, VA 20109 / Fax 703 754-9963 / 703 754-3213